

<b>Committee(s):</b> Finance Grants Oversight and Performance Sub-Committee	<b>Dated:</b> 19/01/2021
<b>Subject:</b> Central Grants Unit – Update Report	<b>Public</b>
<b>Which outcomes in the City Corporation’s Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?</b>	2,3,4,9, 10, 11, 12
<b>Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>If so, how much?</b>	<b>£0</b>
<b>What is the source of Funding?</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain’s Department?</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Chief Grants Officer and Director of City Bridge Trust	<b>For Information</b>
<b>Report author:</b> Jack Joslin, Head of the Central Grants Unit	

## Summary

This report provides an update on the Central Grants Programme (CGP) and the work of the Central Grants Unit (CGU).

## Recommendations:

- a) To note the CGP and CGU progress update report
- b) To note the budget reduction to the City’s Cash elements of the CGP

## Main Report

### Background

1. The CGU has been established since October 2016 to manage the effectiveness of the CGP based on recommendations of the Effectiveness of Grants Service Based Review (SBR) 2014/15.
2. The CGU is co-located with the City Bridge Trust (CBT) team in the Town Clerk’s Department in order to facilitate consistency of approach and harmonise service standards across grant-making activities by the City Corporation (in its various capacities, including as trustee of a number of charities which form part of the CGP). The Chief Grants Officer, responsible for the funding and grant-making activities of CBT is also responsible for maintaining an overview of the CGU (and broader charity matters), with relevant input from the Charities Finance Team (Chamberlain’s Department), with the work being delivered by the Head of Central Grants Unit (HCGU) and Team.

3. In March 2018 the Resource Allocation Sub-Committee and Policy and Resources Committee met and both agreed to support the implementation of the CGP on a permanent basis from the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018.
4. A number of small charities in respect of which the City Corporation is trustee are administered through the CGP in a manner consistent with their charitable objects and governing documents, it being considered in each case to be in the charity's best interests for their most efficient administration and effective application of funds to do so, these matters being kept under review in the normal way. Consistent with the powers of a charity trustee to recover the reasonable costs and expenses of administering their charity, in each case some of these costs are recovered from each of the charities operating as part of the CGP.
5. As noted above, the CGU was originally set up to manage the effectiveness of the CGP. Due to its success, in May 2019 the Policy and Resources Committee agreed that the City Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Neighbourhood Fund be managed by the City CGU. It was agreed that a post be created to manage the programme under the oversight of the Head of the Central Grants Unit (HCGU). Any resources spent on the CIL Neighbourhood Fund by the CGU are met from the 5% administration fee charged to the total CIL.

#### **Overview of the work of the CGU**

6. The CGU has had to continue to adapt to the impact of the Coronavirus Pandemic. All staff have been working from home throughout the period and continued to deliver grant programmes remotely.
7. The CGU Team has had to continue to respond to the changing landscape and has maintained good relationships with grantees, providing flexibility on projects and giving advice where required.
8. The CGU Team will continue to monitor the needs of organisations and the communities they serve, especially in light of the new National Lockdown announced on 4 January 2021. The CGU contacted all existing grantees on 5 January to offer support and flexibility around project dates and delivery outcomes.
9. The CGP maintained its existing deadlines to ensure that organisations still had access to support and could still plan projects for the future. Since members met in September 2020 the CGU has made several responsive grants and delivered the annual Enjoying Green Spaces theme of the CGP. A full list of Grants awarded to date in 2020/21 are listed at **Appendix 1**.
10. The CIL Neighbourhood Fund launched on the 1 September 2020. The fund has received a lot of interest and the CGU have regular discussions with organisations looking to apply.

11. During this period, the HCGU provided additional capacity to the CBT Team to support and chair a task and finish group on the re-opening of the Bridging Divides grant programmes. This work is still ongoing.
12. In line with the work of the Fundamental Review and savings required as a result of the financial impact of the Coronavirus pandemic the City's Cash elements of the CGP and related management costs have been subject to a 12% reduction in line with other departments. The total City's Cash Grants Budget for 2021/22 will be £230,000. This equates to a reduction of £30,000, or £10,000 for each of the City's Cash Grant Programmes.

## **Overview of the CGP**

### **Education and Employment**

1. The Education and Employment theme of the CGP encompasses the grant making for City Educational Trust (290840) and the City of London Corporation Combined Education Charity (312836). At the Education Board in July 2020 members moved to close this programme for the remainder of the 2020/21 financial year. Both Charities fall within the scope of the Corporate Charity Review, a verbal update on the work being undertaken will be provided at the meeting.

### **Inspiring London through Culture**

2. This continues to be a very popular programme and is solely funded from City's Cash. A deadline for the programme was held in July 2020. The CGU received 17 applications for funding totalling over £150,000. This was one of the most popular July rounds since the programme opened in 2016 and likely reflects the financial hardship faced by many City cultural and creative sector operatives.
3. The budget for *Inspiring London through Culture* is £84,000 for 2020/21. The panel agreed to apply additional scrutiny to each application reviewing the viability of the proposal in light of the Coronavirus Pandemic, prioritising the City communities most affected by it be they artists facing financial crises or community groups facing digital and/or educational poverty, or isolation and well-being issues amongst other themes, and whether the project was considered value for money.
4. 6 grants totalling £48,325 have been approved as per the reports outlined in the appendices. This leaves £35,675 from this year's allocation for the next funding round on 4 January 2021.
5. In light of the reduced budget for this programme for 2021/22 it is likely that the CGU will need to reduce the number of grant deadlines to one each year and review the existing funding policy.

## Stronger Communities

6. The Stronger Communities Programme is funded from City's Cash and from the City of London Corporation Combined Relief of Poverty Charity (1073660).
7. At the February 2020 CCS Committee meeting, it was resolved that the CGU administer the City's Cash Small Grants (up to £3,000) element of the Stronger Communities Programme on a rolling basis from 1 April 2020. A subsequent paper went to September 2020 CCS Committee to extend this approach to the Main Grant programme to ensure that the programme can react to emerging community needs in a more strategic and impactful way. This has been well received by the sector and allowed for the CGU to deepen its collaboration with DCCS.
8. There have previously been challenges in attracting suitable applications for the City of London Combined Relief of Poverty Charity and the policy for the charity has been subject to review to also take account of the transfer of funds from two other charities<sup>1</sup>. A policy which is more suitable to the charity, but still operating within the Stronger Communities Programme and in pursuit of its overarching policy objectives was considered by the Community and Children's Services Committee on the 27 September 2020 and approved. The CGU continue to work with DCCS Officers to explore grant making policy and expect to return to the CCS Committee with options before the end of March.
9. The CGU is doing further work with DCCS Officers to explore different options for Strategic Grants. Consideration will need to be made to how grants are publicised in light in the reduction to the City's Cash Grants Budget.

## Enjoying Green Spaces and the Natural Environment

10. This programme is funded solely from City's Cash. Enjoying Green Spaces and the Natural Environment delivered one programme in 2020/21. The current grant round is under assessment, with decisions expected on all the grants considered in February 2021. The programme is on track to spend its full grants budget this financial year.

## Community Infrastructure Levy Neighbourhood Fund (CILNF)

11. The CILNF Launched on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2020. Since opening it has attracted a lot of interest and the CGU deals regularly with enquiries about the fund and what it can support.
12. The CILNF Officer Panel has been set up and has met twice to agree terms of reference and consider initial proposals and applications.
13. The CGU expects to receive several large applications in the first few months of 2021.

---

<sup>1</sup> Nearly £300,000 was transferred from the Corporation of London Benevolent Association in 2019 and around £15,000 from the Signor Favale Marriage Portion Charity in 2020, the former being subject to binding restrictions, the latter being subject to an expression of wishes which was accepted in receiving the funds.

14. The NCILF Programme Manager will attend the Sub-Committee to provide a verbal update on the fund and the work carried out so far.

### General

15. Due to the success of the CGU referred to in the preceding paragraph, the CGU is now also being approached to administer other grants (including charitable grants) which are the responsibility of the City Corporation in its various legal capacities, and also to provide grant-making support in respect of grants that do not form part of the CGP. These additional matters and activities will be reported to this Sub-Committee to the extent that they fall within its remit and will be relevant to the setting of your Sub-Committee's Terms of Reference. This was an anticipated outcome of the Grants SBR.
16. In accordance with the recommendations arising from the Grants SBR which led to the development of the CGP, the CGU still monitors organisations that may be perceived to have fallen through the cracks where they may have previously benefited from funding from the City Corporation under previous arrangements but are now ineligible for funding under the current CGP funding criteria.
17. The City Corporation holds a contingency fund of £100,000 in its City's Cash budget allocated to the International Disasters Fund (IDF) administered by the Finance Committee. The CGU provide advice and make recommendations to the Finance Committee about where to distribute IDF in response to International Appeals. The HCGU has refined the policy for the IDF which has been taken to the January Finance Committee meeting proceeding this meeting. A verbal update will be provided on the outcome at the meeting.
18. The HCGU continues to be the City Corporation nominated London local authority Grants Officer to attend the London Borough Grants Officer Forum, hosted by London Councils. This is a useful forum to discuss grants funding related issues across London and to get updates from London Funders and London Councils. This has been especially useful for sharing experiences of implementing CIL Neighborhood Funds across London local authorities.

### **Monitoring**

19. An overview of the data collected in 2020/21 will be presented in the Annual Report that will be presented to members at the May 2021 meeting of this Sub-Committee.

### **Next steps 2020/21**

20. The CGU will continue to work with the CGO, the Comptroller and City Solicitor's Department and the Chamberlain's Department to explore the consolidation and rationalisation of charities associated with the City Corporation, in particular those whose activities involve grant-making. This

work is taking place through the Corporation-wide Charities Review. A presentation will be made about this work at your meeting. The revised Terms of reference of your Sub-Committee are also intended to better reflect this reporting.

21. The HCGU will work with the Philanthropy Director, who is also co-located within the CBT Team, to support implementation and delivery of the City Corporation's joint Philanthropy Strategy with Bridge House Estates (1035628), and in respect of the latter from which the activities of CBT are funded, the City Corporation being the charity Trustee.

## **Appendix 1 – List of Grants Awarded, Rejected and Withdrawn 2020/21**

### **Background Papers:**

- Policy and Resources Committee, January 2017, 'Review and Reclassification of Former Finance Grants Sub-Committee Grants'.
- Policy and Resources Committee, March 2018, 'Central Grants Programme Review'

Jack Joslin  
Head of Central Grants Unit  
E: [Jack.Joslin@cityoflondon.gov.uk](mailto:Jack.Joslin@cityoflondon.gov.uk)  
Ph : 020 7332 3712